

HARPER CENTER BULLETIN

WILLIAMSTOWN COUNCIL ON AGING

January 2015 Newsletter

I guess the magic words are “Happy New Year”! Or are they “Here we go again”?

It's new year and everyone gets a clean slate. A chance to start over and be renewed, I guess it's how we all use it that counts. Oh, yes, we all know about the annual ritual of making New Years resolutions. OK, enough said. I'm not making any resolutions. Things can change without notice for better or worse with or without resolution. If we all treat each other with respect and decency then there won't be a need for resolutions. We'll be fine.

Anyway, I hope it begins to snow sometime soon. This business of green winter is beginning to be a serious bore. I want to ski and I know a whole bunch of kids who want to go sliding. So when it does snow, be careful out there, it can get slippery. And please wear your coats, hats and gloves. It can get real cold and we don't need slips, falls or frozen people! So Let's have a great year! We've got lots of plans and events scheduled for the coming months so away we go!



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Serving elders since
1966!

Aging Mastery

Aging Mastery is a new program. It's designed to demonstrate how a little education and self tracking of healthy behaviors can help older adults make small but very meaningful changes which actually may have very positive effects on their health. The program was originated at the National COA and is being sponsored in Massachusetts by the MA Association of COA's and Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs. There was an opportunity to apply for funds to offer the program in November and we applied. Guess what? We've been given a grant to offer the Aging Mastery series with our sister COA's in North Berkshire. That's really good news folks and there will be more to follow in the next week. A separate newsletter will follow with information so watch for it!

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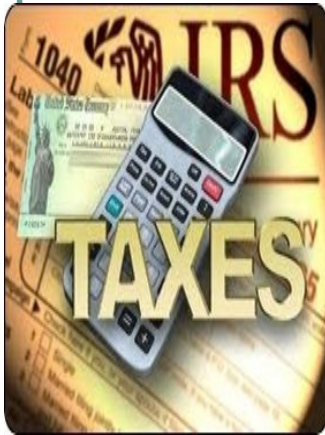
Chronic Pain



Our friend Maria Connors from Elder Services will be here at Harper on January 20th to bring us a new program, this one on the topic of chronic pain. They tell me that chronic pain is defined as pain which lasts longer than six months. Common causes include headaches, injuries, joint pain, backaches. Other people report pain in the absence of any verifiable injury. It can be described as constant mild pain, shooting pain, burning, soreness, stiffness and tightness. It can cause all sorts of problems and its impact on us is always unwelcome.

So does this sound like you or someone you know? The Chronic Pain Self Management Program comes to us from Elder Services and is a series of free workshops, two hours weekly for six weeks starting in February. Oh, it's FREE. We'll host Maria with a chicken dinner with fixings at noon on January 20th and she'll tell you about the program after that. So join us and bring a friend in pain!

AARP Tax Aide 2015



Watch out! And beware, the Taxman is sniffing at yer pocketbooks again. It's the time of year when we have to settle big and small accounts with government. Seems like Taxman just seems to appear right after the holidays reminding us to pay our share of booty so the wheels keep running...

Oh well. To help along the way we'll be hosting our AARP Tax Aide Friends again this year. And trust me, we're glad to have them aboard. We'll be making appointments for you-and appointments are required-beginning on January 13. That folks, is a Tuesday. We'll start February 2nd with sessions on Saturday mornings from 9-noon and Tuesday evenings 6:00 to 9:00. Sessions are free and available to all tax payers of any age and moderate income. Each session is approximately 1 hour in length, please bring last years tax returns and any pertinent documentation necessary to complete this years taxes. Call to schedule appointments -458.8250.

Food events...



OK, it's a new year and we're back in the saddle. So how about a return of our Friday breakfast gatherings? So lets have an FTF event on Friday January 16th. Easy enough, And how about BOT on Friday January 23? I thing the sausage and home fries went well on the last one in December don't you? We'll reprise that menu!

Oh, and we want to do a Hot Fudge Sundae event, on a Thursday. How about the 15th? It's Hot Ice Cream so it's OK right? And Hot Chocolate and Cookies on Thursday the 8th at 1:00? Hot chocolate works in January right? And it's chocolate!

There will be more on program news for these two dates coming soon!

Pandemics

This will be a reschedule event. Shawn Godfrey from our own Village Ambulance service will be here at Harper on Tuesday January 27 to talk about community response to a pandemic. Since the last article and program announcement on this program, talk about spreading Ebola virus has really abated. That doesn't mean that there will never be pandemics. In fact, world history is pretty clear on the issue. And yes, there are bad epidemics out there in the world, there is even talk of bird flu again. Can it happen here? Who knows. But I bet Shawn will have some insight into the issue. How would we react if there was a big epidemic? What would a community like Williamstown actually do? Come in and we'll tell you.

Of course there will be lunch first. How about a bit of shrimp and sausage interpretive gumbo with pasta? Let's do that. Lunch at noon, conversation at 12:30.

If it snows...

OK, let's talk about a couple snow rules in effect when we get snow here in Williamstown and how it affects operations here at the Williamstown Council on Aging. Ready? Here we go!

Rule Number 1: Safety First!

When we have snow, we may cancel regularly scheduled daily programs at the Harper Center. It is equally possible that we will not operate the van if the weather is really bad. We don't want people out if the weather is hazardous, and we won't operate the van if the roads are slippery. Sorry, this is New England and snow emergencies are to be expected.

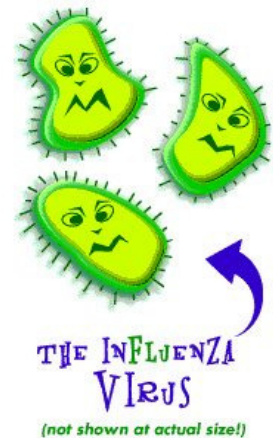
Rule Number 2: Safety First!

We're sorry if we create inconveniences for anyone. We don't want to, but sometimes, it can't be helped! Always call with questions or concerns. Thanks! Brian. 458-8250

File of Life

Do you have a File of Life magnet and card? We all hope for long life and health but if something were to happen to you and medical personnel were required, File of Life can be very useful. It's a card showing medical data including medical conditions and medications. It also has spaces for emergency contact information, allergies and medications. Having a File of Life filled out and attached to your refrigerator helps emergency personnel understand your treatment options quickly, especially if you are unable to tell them. There is also a smaller version to fill out and carry in the pocketbook or wallet. Two for the price of one!

Want your own? Call us here at the Harper Center and we'll deliver one to you. Or pick one up while you're here. Oh. They're free. Free is good right? Want one?



Our friend Liz Hannock is the featured artist of the month at the Milne library. How about that! Her exhibit, which runs through January is called "Children of the 70's". Hmmm, I wonder if I will recognize anyone in those pictures? Her show is certain to bring back a host of memories so be sure to get over to Milne and check it out!

And speaking of the library, our monthly book discussion group have announced their schedule for 2015. We'll start in February as we've already noted the January book in a different edition! Now, without further delay, here are the first few months books;

In February they'll be reading William Maxwell's "Folded Leaf" the March book is "Nothing to Envy" by Barbara Demick and they'll cover Karen Shepard's "Celestials" in April. The merry month of May brings "Unbroken" by Laura Hillenbrand, June busts out with "Heartbreak House" by George Bernard Shaw and you'll light up the sky in July with "I Know Why the caged Bird Sings" from Maya Angelou. There, that will cover the first 6 months of the year! We'll put the remaining books in the July newsletter. In the meanwhile remember that the Book Discussion Group meets on the first Friday of the month at 10:00 at the Milne library. The month's book selections are available a month in advance at the library as well, just ask them! All welcome!

Now, a special treat, on January 22nd, Melissa from Legacy Home Senior Care will be here at 1:00 on Thursday January 22nd to lead a floral arrangement craft date. You'll remember them, they did that great pumpkin decorating session in October. So join us, there will be great snacks at the break!

Page Four News and Notes

Serena Merrill, our Foot Care Nurse, will be here at the Harper Center on Tuesday, January 20 to clip toenails and rub aching feet. January is filling up fast folks, there are still a couple openings for January-and February is getting full at this point as well. Act quickly OK? Need an appointment? Please call soon and remember, it's always first come first serve!!

Peg Jenks, our SHINE Counselor, will be here on Wednesday January 21st at 10:30 to assist those with questions about their health care insurance. Appointments not required but helpful. She's also available for individual consultation thru the office at the Harper Center so call us at 458-8250 and we'll set you up.

Our friends from Sweetbrook will be here to conduct the monthly Blood Pressure Clinic at noon on the 13th, right before the Friendship Club as usual. Our friend Jessica will likely bring those magic cookies as a reward for sticking your arm out and having your numbers read. Small price to pay right?

The monthly Brown Bag offering, sponsored by the Foodbank of Western Massachusetts will be ready for pick up or delivery on Friday afternoon, January 23rd, right here at Harper. Brown Bag is a monthly food supplement of shelf stable foods and fresh fruits and veggies in season literally delivered in a brown paper sack. Interested? Call us here at 458-8250 and we'll talk!